

U.S. Department of Energy- Idaho Operations Office
National Environmental Policy Act
Categorical Exclusion Determination

Project Title: Launch Pad Signage

Project Description and Purpose:

This document outlines the job requirements for the Environmental Review Process (ERP) concerning (4) Launch Pad temporary sign sites, the skids on which they will be placed, and two gravel pads for visitors to stop and take photos.

The NRIC Nuclear Energy Launch Pad will be a centralized location for advanced nuclear developments. It will allow for shared use of physical and supported resources and expedite advanced nuclear deployments.

- The project includes four sign skids. Each skid has a base measuring 8 feet by 16 feet and stands 12 feet tall.
- Two of the signs necessitate a pull-off area to enable visitors to take pictures with the signs. These locations are designated for the West and East signs (refer to the map below).

The West sign will be located on W. Portland Ave. near the intersection with Hwy 20/26. This area has been previously disturbed but will be grubbed and graveled. We envision an approximately 50-foot by 50-foot area with the sign skid centered as depicted.

Minor surface disturbances may be required at the North, East, and South sign locations to level the ground for skid placement. It is anticipated that these disturbances will be confined to the area of the sign skid (8 feet by 16 feet) and any additional area impacted during access from the road for sign installation.





Environmental Aspects or Potential Sources of Impact:

Air Emissions

NA

Discharging to Surface-, Storm-, or Ground Water

NA

Disturbing Cultural or Biological Resources

There is the potential for this work to impact vegetation and for project personnel to interact with various wildlife species. A Biological Resource Review will be arranged within two weeks prior to the initiation of any activities that might disturb soil or vegetation and again following completion of project activities. A nesting bird survey is included with the Biological Resource Review for actions occurring between April 1 - October 1 per compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Bat surveys are also included with the Biological Resource Review in accordance with the INL Bat Protection Plan.

This proposed action is a federal undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). Per the 2023 Programmatic Agreement, as amended in 2025, the CRMO has reviewed the proposed activities under BEA-26-012. The CRMO has established the undertaking's Area of Potential Effects, reviewed previous studies, and has determined there are no built environment or archaeological historic properties present. There are no effects to historic properties.

Generating and Managing Waste

NA

Releasing Contaminants

NA

Using, Reusing, and Conserving Natural Resources

NA

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Determination.

For Categorical Exclusions (CXs), the proposed action must not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environmental, safety, and health, or similar requirements of Department of Energy (DOE) or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources (see 10 CFR 1021); (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Appendix B. The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. Segmentation can occur when a proposal is broken down into small parts in order to avoid the appearance of significance of the total action. However, segmentation does not include proposals that are developed and potentially implemented over multiple phases where each phase results in a decision whether to proceed to the subsequent phase. There is no extraordinary circumstance related to the proposal that is likely to cause a reasonably foreseeable significant adverse effect or for which DOE does not know the environmental effect. Extraordinary circumstances are unique situations presented by specific proposals, including, but not limited to, scientific controversy about the environmental effects of the proposal; uncertain effects or effects involving unique or unknown risks; and unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.

References: B1.15 "Support buildings"

Justification: For the DOE regulations regarding the application of categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see 10 CFR 1021.102 and Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021. Implementing guidance for categorical exclusions can be found in DOE's National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures (June 30, 2025): (See full text in regulations and implementing procedures).

The proposal must fit within the classes of actions listed in Appendix B to 10 CFR Part 1021 and must satisfy the conditions that are integral elements of the classes of actions therein.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal. DOE or an applicant may modify the proposal to avoid reasonably foreseeable adverse significant effects such that the categorical exclusion would apply.

The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

B1.15 Support buildings. Siting, construction or modification, and operation of support buildings and support structures (including, but not limited to, trailers and prefabricated and modular buildings) within or contiguous to an already developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible). Covered support buildings and structures include, but are not limited to, those for office purposes; parking; cafeteria services; education and training; visitor reception; computer and data processing services; health services or recreation activities; routine maintenance activities; storage of supplies and equipment for administrative services and routine maintenance activities; security (such as security posts); fire protection; small-scale fabrication (such as machine shop activities), assembly, and testing of non-nuclear equipment or components; and similar support purposes, but exclude facilities for nuclear weapons activities and waste storage activities, such as activities covered in B1.10, B1.29, B1.35, B2.6, B6.2, B6.4, B6.5, B6.6, and B6.10 of this appendix.

Approved by Robert Herzog, DOE-ID NEPA Compliance Officer on: 1/7/2026